

An incredible character promotes an incredible, edible product

BY DEBBIE KOONTZ

LANCASTER — Imagine a grown man — oh, around 40 in age, 6 feet tall, with sandy-colored hair and a full mustache — making omelets for a living.

Hard to visualize? Perhaps for most, but not for

those who know the witty and bubbly Howard Helmer, eastern representative of the American Egg Board; better known to the world as the "Omelet King."

He received this eminent and ponderable designation because he holds the Guinness Book of World

Records title for making the most omelets — 217 — in 30 minutes. Helmer achieved this recognition in 1978 at Disneyland in California.

Since then, the zany demonstrator has served as spokesman for the Egg Board making hundreds of presentations around the country on behalf of the versatile egg.

Maintaining a hilariously hyper personality despite a rather sultry afternoon, Helmer presented one of his demonstrations to several dietitians, home economics teachers, food editors, politicians and egg producers last Friday in Steinman Park, Lancaster.

Guests had the opportunity to make their own lunch (an omelet, of course) under the guidance of the master himself, and to share in some of Helmer's cooking knowledge.

Sponsored by Commonwealth National Bank, the event was designed to provide continuing support to the egg farmers of Pennsylvania through the joint sponsorship of the Egg Promotion Council of PDA and the Commonwealth Bank; and serve as a kicker for the "May is Egg Month" theme.

Howard, who hails from Chicago but lives in New York City now, says he loves the traveling and the people he meets. Though this "city boy" has only visited farms "a few times," and "thought the world began and ended in the city," he promotes the egg as though it were a moral matter of right and wrong.

"Who didn't eat breakfast?" are his opening words to his audience. After a brief scolding and a few jokes, Helmer proceeds to whip together a blender full of Instant Egg Pickup with orange juice, honey, egg and brandy, and then make them drink it.

Throughout his presentation, he makes the audience repeatedly recite the perfect omelet — "Here's the recipe. two eggs, and

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Despite the humidity, Helmer got very egg-cited as he prepared an Instant Egg Pickup for guests who hadn't had breakfast. Helmer uses his incredibly hyper and altruistic personality to advantage when lecturing on the merits of eggs.



Robert Bucher, vice president and manager of the agricultural loan department at Commonwealth National Bank (sponsors of the afternoon event) prepares his omelet under the scrutinized guidance of Omelet King Howard Helmer. Also working for her lunch, is county commissioner Jean Mowery, left, who joined Bucher and other dignitaries for an afternoon of fun and egg promotion in Steinman Park in Lancaster.

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